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ARTES SCIENTIA VERITAS



THE
HISTORY
OF
ROMANCES.



D. T. FROST

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1715a



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THE
HISTORY
OF
ROMANCES.

AN

Enquiry into their *Original* ;
Instructions for Composing them ;

AN

Account of the most Eminent
AUTHORS ;

With Characters, and Curious Observations
upon the Best Performances of that Kind.

Written in *Latin* by HURT^{ius} ;

Made *English* by

Mr. STEPHEN LEWIS.

— juvat integros accedere fontes,
Atque haurire. *Lucr.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. HOOKE, at the *Flower-de-luce*, and
T. CALDECOTT, at the *Sun* ; both against St.
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THE PREFACE.

***** HERE is not any
 T Speculation , which
 ***** affords a more agreeable Pleasure to
 the Mind , than that of be-
 holding from what Obscure and
 Mean Beginnings , the most Po-
 lite and Entertaining Arts have
 A 3 risen

ij The P R E F A C E.

risen to be the Admiration and Delight of Mankind. To pursue them up to the most Abstruse Fountains, and then to view by what Steps they arise to Perfection ; does not only excite an Amazement at their Increase ; but an Impatient Desire of Inventing some New Subject, to be improv'd and advanc'd by Posterity.

The first Occasion of Introducing ROMANCE into the World, was, without Dispute, to mollify the Rigour of Precepts, by the Allurements of Example. Where the Mind can't be subdued into Virtue, by Reason and Philosophy ; nothing can influ-

influence it more, than to present to it the Success and Felicity, which Crowns the Pursuit of what's Great and Honourable. As the Poet very elegantly alludes to Homer;

*Qui quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe,
[quid utile, quid non*

*Plinius & melius, Chrysippo &
[Crantore dicit.*

And since in all Ages there were very few real Instances, fit to be proposed for Exact Patterns of Imitation; the Ingenious Fabulist was forced to supply them out of his own Invention.

A 4

Hence

Hence it appears, that the Original of ROMANCE is very Ancient ; since this Way of Promoting Virtue has been received in the Earliest Ages ; as is evident from the first Records of Mankind. And as it stands very remote from Modern Ages ; so, That it is found out, must be an High Satisfaction to the Curious in Antiquity.

Upon this Account, They are very much indebted to the Labour and Penetration of Huetius ; who has, with the greatest Accuracy and Judgment, traced the Subject he undertook to Illustrate, till he found it in
its

THE PREFACE. V

its Infancy, involved in the Umbrage of Fable, and perplexed in the Folds of Mystery and Riddle.

*This Task was enjoin'd Him
(He informs us,) by his Acquaintance and Friend, Monsieur Segrais; a Gentleman very intimately versed in all Polite Learning; and admirably well qualified, to Discern and Judge, upon the Subject of ROMANCES; since He had discover'd himself to be a Compleat Master in the Art, by several inimitable Productions of that Nature, which he published in the Language of his Country: A Country, Famous for all Sorts of
A 5 Delight-*

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Delightful Amusement, and producing Men of the Quickest Apprehension, and Strong Propensity to the Advancement of Letters; as appears from the Labours of the Learned of that Nation; among whom, Huetius has the Honour not to be the Lowest in Esteem.

This Modest Encomium may possibly be thought Profuse, upon the Author of so invaluable a Treatise as the following; but,

*In tenui labor; at tenuis non gloria;
[ria; si quem
Numina læva sinunt, auditque vocatus Apollo.*

V I R G.

And

And, in my Opinion, the Man who acquits himself well of the Province he undertakes, (tho' of small Importance) deserves as much, as He who has been more Fortunate in the Choice of a Subject for his Application.

Without doubt, Huetius was sensible of this; otherwise he would have bestowed his Time to a better Account, since He had before approv'd himself very well to the World, by his Ingenious Performances in Divinity, and other Learning. And I dare assert, that none of his Labours have contributed more to his Reputation, than his

viii] The P R E F A C E.

*his Accurate Disquisition into
the Original of ROMANCES.*

*For if it has not improved,
It has certainly enlarg'd his Fame ;
because It is Recommended to
the World , in Two of the most
Extensive Languages Known in
it ; I mean, Latin and French :
So that I have no great Reason
to fear its being well received
in English : Especially since Ro-
mance has of late convey'd it
self very far into the Esteem of
this Nation , and is become the
Principal Diversion of the Re-
tirement of People of all Condi-
tions.*

And

And (tho' we have been hitherto, for the most part, supply'd with Translations from the French) it is to be hoped, that we won't any longer subsist upon Reverse; but that some English Genius will dare to Naturalize Romance into our Soil; which (I don't doubt) it will agree with, as well as that of a Neighbouring Country; since we are acknowledg'd to be very Ingenious, in Improving Foreign Inventions.

To promote this Design, the Reader will find in the following Treatise, the Best Instructions for Composing ROMANCES, with all Necessary Dispositions

x The P R E F A C E.

positions for the Perfection of the Art. And because the only Way to a Right Judgment upon our own, is to Compare them with the Performances of other Men; Our Author has, with Great Perspicuity and Clearness, illustrated the Beauties, and pointed out the Deficiencies, of the Best Productions of this Kind; and, according to the Direction of the Poet,

—miscuit utile dulci.

H O R.

*I have no more to add, by way of Preface; but to hope the Original has not suffer'd, by Translation into English: If it
has;*


*has ; This , I presume , is not
the first Case , where a Good
Design has aton'd for some slight
Imperfections in the Prosecution
of it.*

T H E



CORRIGENDA.

Pag. 2. L. 16. read *Paths*. P. 6. L. 21. r. *thron*
out. P. 12. L. 20. r. *to*. P. 16. L. 12. r. *F*
gure. P. 18. L. 14. r. *World*. P. 24. L. 20.
Wise Men. P. 34. L. 8. r. *bear*. P. 43. L. 1.
r. *Army for Government*. P. 44. L. 6. r. *from fo*
of. P. 47. L. 14. r. *Ctesiar*. Ib. L. 21. r. *Ctesia*
P. 64. L. 1. r. *Verisimilitude*. P. 114. L. 6.
Michael. P. 120. L. 17. r. *Dante*.





THE
ORIGINAL
OF
ROMANCES.

S I R,
Y OUR Curiosity and
Desire to be inform'd
of *The Original of Ro-*
mances, is both Reasonable and
Natural, since you Excel in the
Art of Composing them. I
A wish

with I may discover the same Perfection in the History I now send you of 'em.

At present my Books are not with me, and my Thoughts are taken up with Matters of a very different Nature. I am satisfy'd of the Labour and Difficulty of such an Attempt, since 'tis neither *Provence*, nor *Spain*, as some are of Opinion, that we shall find to have given Birth to this agreeable Amusement: We must in the Pursuit of it, enquire into the remotest Countries, and derive our Account from the most Latent Part of Antiquity. However, I must gratify your Request, since our continu'd and strict Friendship gives you a Right to demand, and divests me of

of the Power to deny you any Thing.

The Name of *Romance* was formerly extended not only to Prose but Verse; *Giraldi* and *Pi-gra*, in their Treatises *de Romanzi*, scarce mention any other, and lay down the *Bayardos* and *Arioste* for Instances of their Opinion. But the Custom of this Age prevails to the contrary; so that we esteem nothing to be properly *Romance* but Fictions of Love Adventures, disposed into an Elegant Style in Prose, for the Delight and Instruction of the Reader.

I call them Fictions, to discriminate them from True Histories; and I add, of Love Adventures, because Love ought to

A 2 be

be the Principal Subject of *Romance*. It is required to be in Prose by the Humour of the Times. It must be compos'd with Art and Elegance, lest it should appear to be a rude undigested Mass, without Order or Beauty.

The principal End of *Romance*, or at least what ought to be so, and is chiefly to be regarded by the Author, is the Instruction of the Reader; before whom he must present Virtue successful, and Vice in Disgrace; but because the Mind of Man naturally hates to be inform'd, and (by the Influence of Self-Conceit) resists Instruction; 'tis to be deceived by the Blandishments of Pleasure; and the Ri-
gor

gor of Precept is to be subdued by the Allurements of Example. Thus we regulate our own Defects, and at the same Time condemn them in others.

Thus it appears, That the Entertainment of the Reader, which the Ingenious Romancer seems chiefly to design, is subordinate to his Principal Aim, which is the Instruction of the Mind, and Correction of Manners ; and the Beauty of a *Romance* stands or falls according to its Attention to this Definition and End.

'Tis with an Account of this Sort that I shall endeavour to entertain you, and I hope your Curiosity extends no farther.

I shall not therefore in this Place take *Romances* in Verse, much less *Epic Poems*, which beside the Difference of their Style, are compos'd of very different Essentials which distinguish them from *Romances* : Tho' in several Respects there is a great Relation between them ; and according to *Aristotle* (who informs us, That 'tis Fiction rather than Verse which makes a Poet) a Writer of *Romance* may be reckon'd among the Poets. *Petronius* tells us, That Poems are to move in a great Circumference by the Ministry of the Gods, and Expressions vast and audacious ; so that First, They may be looked upon as Oracles throughout, from a Spirit full of
Fury,

Fury, and then for a faithful and exact Narration.

Romances preserve a much greater Simplicity, and are not so exalted, nor have the same Figures in Invention and Expression.

Poems have more of the sublime, though they are not always confined to Probability. *Romances* have more of Probability, though they don't advance so far toward the Sublime.

Poems are more regular and correct in the Frame of their Contrivance, and receive less Addition from Events and Episodes than *Romances*, which are capable of these Accessions, because their Style is not so elevated; and they don't so far di-

stend the Intellect, so that they give it leave to admit a greater Number of different Ideas.

In short, *Poems* make some Military Act, or Politic Conduct, their Theme, and only descant upon Love at Pleasure; whereas *Romances*, on the contrary, have Love for their Principal Subject, and don't concern themselves in War or Politicks, but by Accident. I speak of Regular *Romances*, for those in Old *French*, *Spanish*, and *Italian*, have generally more of the Soldier than Gallant.

This induced *Giraldi* to conceive, That the Name *Romance* was derived from a *Greek* Word, signifying *Force* and *Strength*, since the Performances in that kind
made

made it their Business to Illustrate and Display the Valour and Atchievements of the *Palladines* ; but *Giraldi* was mistaken in this , as you'll find hereafter.

Neither would I here be understood to comprehend Histories which are observed to contain many Falsities ; such is that of *Herodotus* (which , by the Way , is not so Guilty in this Respect as some imagine) : The Navigation of *Hanno*, the Life of *Apollonius* wrote by *Philostatus*, and many others.

These Works are true in the Main, and false in some Parts. *Romances*, on the contrary, are false in the Gross, and true in some Particulars. These contain

A 5 Truth.

Truth mingled with Falshood
 those Falshood irradiated by
 some Insersion of Truth ;
 mean, that Falshood is so Predo-
 minant in *Romance*, that it may
 be altogether False in Whole
 and every Particular.

Aristotle informs us, That that
 Tragedy whose Argument is
 known, and extracted from Hi-
 story, is the most Perfect, be-
 cause it arises nearer to Verisi-
 mility than that whose Subject is
 New and Fictitious. However
 this he does not condemn, be-
 cause tho' the Plot of the For-
 mer be taken from History, yet
 the Generality of the Spectators
 may be Ignorant of it, and there-
 fore this Sort can't fail to give
 Diversion to the Company. The
 same

same may be apply'd to *Roman-*
ces, with this Restraint, that a
total Fiction of the Argument is
more allowable in *Romances*,
where the Actors are of indiffe-
rent Quality, (such are the Co-
mic) than in Heroic Performan-
ces, where Princes and Conque-
rors are the Characters, and
where the Adventures are Me-
morable and Illustrious; because
it can't be probable that great
Transactions and Events lie hid
to the World, and neglected by
Historians; and Probability,
which is not always observ'd in
History, is essential to a *Ro-*
mance.

I exclude that sort of History
which is False throughout the
whole Narration, but was in-
vented

vented through the Deficiency of true Accounts and Information ; such are the imaginary Originals of most Nations , especially those which are Barbarous. Of this kind are the Histories so palpably forged by the Monk *Annius Viterbensis*, which deserve the Indignation and Contempt of the Learned World.

There's the same difference between *Romances*, and these sort of Works, as between those, who by innocent Artifice Disguize themselves in Masquerade for their own Pleasure, and the Diversion of others , and those who assume the Name and Person of the Dead, or absent, or possess themselves of their
Estates,

Estates, by the Colour of a Resemblance to them.

Lastly, I shall exclude Fables from my Subject, for *Romance* is a Fiction of Things which may, but never have happen'd; whereas the Matter of Fables is what never has, nor ever will be perform'd.

Now I have determin'd the Works which properly deserve the Name of *Romance*, I assert, That their Original is deriv'd from the *Eastern Nations*. I mean the *Ægyptians*, *Arabians*, *Persians*, and *Syrians*. I don't doubt your Concurrence with my Opinion, when I shall have shown, that the most Ancient Authors of this Work were descended from these Countries. *Clearchus*
who

who composed Books of Love, was of *Cilicia*, a Province near *Syria*. *Jamblichus*, who wrote the Adventure of *Rhodanes* and *Sinouis*, was Born of Syrian Parents, and educated at *Babylon*. *Heliodorus*, Author of the Story of *Theagenes* and *Chariclea*, was of *Emesa*, a Town of *Phanicia*. *Lucian*, who wrote the Metamorphosis of *Lucius* into an Ass, was of *Samosata*, the Metropolis of *Commagena*, a Port of *Syria*. *Achilles Tatius*, who wrote the Amour of *Clitophon* and *Leucippe*, was of *Alexandria* in *Ægypt*. The fabulous History of *Barlaam* and *Josaphat*, was compos'd by St. *John of Damascus*, the Chief City of *Syria*. *Damascius*, who compos'd four Books of

of Fictions, not only incredible, as he Entitles them, but far distant from the reach of Probability, was, as *Photius* assures us, of the same *Damascus*. The three *Xenophons*, Romancers, which *Suidas* speaks of; one was of *Antioch* in *Syria*, another of *Cyprus*, an Island near that Nation. So that this deserves to be stil'd the Countrey of the *Romancers* rather than *Greece*, whither they were only transplanted; tho' they lik'd the Soil so well, and found it so agreeable, that they immediately took Root.

'Tis hardly credible how the Genius of these People is disposed and addicted to Poetry, Invention, and Fiction. All their
Discourse

Discourse is Figures. They never express themselves but in Allegories. Their Theology and Philosophy, but principally their Politicks and Morals, are all disguised under Fables and Parables.

We may see by the Hieroglyphicks of the *Ægyptians*, to what a degree that Nation inclined to be Mysterious ; every Thing with them was express'd by Images ; all in Disguise. Their Religion was veil'd, and never disclos'd to the Vulgar, but under the Mask of Fables ; which they never took off, but for the Information of such as were thought worthy to be initiated into their *Arcana*. *Herodotus* says, That the *Greeks* had from them

them their Mythology, and Theology ; and he relates some Stories which himself had learned from the *Ægyptians*, and for which he is thought too Credulous, tho' he delivers them only as Fables. However, it tickled the Genius, and suited the Fancies of the *Greeks*, a Nation, as *Herodotus* affirms, desirous to learn, and entirely addicted to Novelties.

'Twas without doubt from these Priests, that *Pythagoras* and *Plato*, in their Voyage to *Ægypt*, learned to Transform their Philosophy, and hide it under the Shadow of Mystery and Disguise.

As for the *Arabians*, if you enquire into their Books, you'll find

find nothing but Unnatural Metaphors, Similitudes, and Fictions. Their *Alcoran* is of this kind ; and *Mahomet* declares that he made it so, that it might be understood with less Difficulty, and leave a more lasting Impression. They have translated the Fables of *Æsop* into their own Language, and some of that Country have composed others in Imitation of them. *Locman*, so Famous in the *Eastern* Works, is no other than *Æsop*. His Fables, which the *Arabians* amassed into a prodigious Volume, raised him such a Reputation among them, that the *Alcoran* bestows a particular Chapter to Illustrate his Wisdom, which bears his Name for its Title.

The

The Lives of their Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles, are all Fabulous. Nothing affects them so nearly as Poetry, which is the Study of their Eminent Genius's. This their Inclination is not Modern; it prevailed before the Time of *Makomet*, as appears from our having some Performances of that kind, which bear as Ancient a Date. *Erpenius* affirms, that all the other Parts of the World together had not produc'd such a Number of Poets as *Arabia*. They reckon Sixty as Princes of their Profession; each of which is attended by Troops of a lower Esteem. The most Illustrious wrote upon Love; and some of their Books upon that Subject have

have been dispersed in the *West*; many of their *Caliphs* have thought this Art not unworthy their Application. *Abdalla*, one of them, distinguish'd himself in this Respect, and compos'd a Book of Similitudes, as *Elmacin* informs us.

'Tis from the *Arabians* (in my Judgment) that we receive the Art of Rhyming; and 'tis highly probable that the *Leonine Verses* were made in Imitation of them: For it does not appear, that this Way of Writing was introduced into *Europe* before the Irruption of *Taric* and *Muza* into *Spain*; whereas we find it very prevalent in the following Ages; tho' otherwise I could produce that Rhymes
were

were not unknown to the Ancient *Romans*.

The *Persians* have not at all come short of the *Arabians*, in the Art of Falsifying agreeably. For altho' they detested nothing more, and forbad their Children nothing with greater Severity, than Lying, yet in their Books, and Commerce of Letters, they were extremely delighted with them, if Fictions may properly be said to be Lies. We need no farther Conviction in this Point than the Fabulous Adventures of their Lawgiver *Zoroaster*. *Strabo* informs us, that their Teachers deliver'd Moral Precepts to their Disciples, under the Umbrage of Fiction; and in another Place he tells us, there's no Credit

dit to be given to the Ancient Histories of the *Persians*, *Medes*, and *Syrians*, because of the strong Inclination their Writers had to relate Fallacies for Truth; since the Composers of Fables were in the Highest Esteem, and were sure the People would take Pleasure to read those Fabulous Recitals compos'd after the Manner of Histories. The Fables of *Æsop* are so much in Favour with them, that they will have the Author to be their Countryman (the same with *Locman*, mention'd in the *Alcoran*, as I have observ'd) who is in so high Reputation among all the People in the *Levant*, that they despoil *Phrygia* of the Honour of his Birth, and vindicate it to themselves.

For

For the *Arabians* say he was of the Race of the *Hebrews*; and the *Persians* assert, that he was an *Arabian* Negro, and lived in the Town *Casuvim*, which is the *Arsacia* of the Antients. Others on the contrary (observing his Life written by *Mirkond*, to be very agreeable to that of *Æsop*, which *Maximus Planudes* has left; and taking Notice, that as the Angels give Wisdom to *Locman* in *Mirkond*, so *Mercury* bestows the same upon *Æsop*, according to *Philostratus*) are persuaded that the *Greeks* have stolen *Locman* from the *Orientals*, and of him composed their *Æsop*. But I must not here determine this Controversy. I shall only recommend what is said by

Strabo

Strabo to your Notice, That the Histories of the People in the *East* are stufft with Lies, and are not at all Faithful or Exact; that it is very probable they have been Fictitious in their Account of the Author, and Original of Fables, as well as in the rest; that the *Greeks* are more Diligent, and of better Credit, both in their Chronology and History; and that the Conformity of *Mirkond's Locman* with the *Æsop* of *Planudes* and *Philostratus*, does no more prove that *Æsop* was *Locman*, than that *Locman* was *Æsop*. The *Persians* have Sirnamed *Locman* the Sage, for that *Æsop* was in Effect reckon'd in the Number of the *Wise*. They say he was very well ver-
fed

sed in the Science of Medicine, that he found out admirable Secrets, and among the rest that of reviving the Dead.

They have been so laborious in their Paraphrases and Comments upon his Fables, that they (as well as the *Arabians*) have augmented them into a great Volume, a Copy of which is to be seen in the *Vatican*. His Reputation has spread as far as *Ægypt* and *Nubia*, where his Character and Wisdom are in great Veneration. The Modern *Turks* have no less Esteem for him, and believe, with *Mirkond*, that he liv'd in *David's* Time; in which Account (if he be really *Æsop*, and we may confide in the *Greek Chronology*) they are

B not

not mistaken above Four Hundred and Fifty Years, which is very excusable in the *Turks*, who rarely come so near in their Computation. This Opinion would agree better with *Hesiod*, who was Cotemporary with *Solomon*; and who (in the Opinion of *Quintilian*) deserves the Honour of the Invention of Fables, which is attributed to *Æsop*.

There are no Poets that equal the *Persians* in License; they give themselves to Falsify: The Lives of their Saints, the Original of their Religion, they have so disfigur'd in their Histories (the Truth of which we know from the Relations of the *Greeks* and *Romans*) that we can't

be sure of any Thing they deliver. They have degenerated so far from their once laudable Detestation of those who advanced their own Interest by Falshood, that they now account it an Honour to do so. They are passionately fond of Poetry ; 'tis the Diversion of the Princes and People. The chief Entertainment of a Feast is wanting by the absence of a Poet. The Works of Gallantry and Love-Stories have been Famous, and discover the Romancing Genius of the Nation.

The *Indians* also, Neighbours of the *Persians*, had a strong Inclination to Fabulous Inventions. *Sandabar* of that Country composed a Book of *Parables*,
 B 2 which

which was Translated by the *Hebrews*, and is at this Day to be found in the Libraries of the Curious. Father *Poussin*, the Jesuit, has joyned to his *Pachymeron*, which he lately Printed at Rome, a Dialogue between *Absolom*, King of the *Indies*, and a *Gymnosophist*, upon several Questions of *Morality*; where this Philosopher never expresses himself but in Fables, after the Manner of *Æsop*. The Preface to this Book imports, that it was carefully kept in the Treasury of the Charters of the Realm; that *Perzoez* Physician of *Chosroez*, King of *Persia*, Translated it out of *Indian* and *Persian*, some other out of *Persian* into *Arabian*; and *Simcon Sethi*

Sethi from *Arabian* into *Greek*. This Book is so little different from the *Apologues*, which bear the Name of the *Indian Pilpay*, and which were seen in *French* some few Years since, that there's no doubt but that it was either the Original, or the Copy. For 'tis said that this *Pilpay* was a *Brachman*, who had a Great Post in the Affairs of State and Government of the *Indies* under King *Dabckelin*; that he comprized all his Politics and Morals within this Book, which was preserved by the Kings of the *Indies*, as a Treasure of Wisdom and Learning. That the Reputation of this Book being carried so far as to *Nonchircvon*, King of *Persia*, he procured a

Copy of it by the Interest of his Physician, who translated it into *Persian* ; that Caliph *Abui-afar Almanzor* caused it to be translated from *Persian* into *Arabian* ; and another out of *Arabian* into *Persian* ; and that after all these *Persian* Translations, a New one was composed different from all the former ; and from this came the *French* Translation. 'Tis certain, that whoever reads the History of the pretended Patriarchs of the *Indians*, *Brammond* and *Bremaw*, of their Posterity and Propagation, will need no farther Proof to convince him of the Love this People have for Fables. This inclines me to believe that *Horace*, when he gave the Epithet

thet of Fabulous to the River *Hydaspes*, which arises in this Country, meaned that it begins and ends its Course among a People very much addicted to Fiction and Disguise.

These Fictions and Parables which you see make up the prophane Learning of the Nations before-mention'd, have been sanctify'd in *Syria*; and the Sacred Authors complying with the Humour of the *Jews*, made Use of them to express the Inspirations they receiv'd from Heaven. The Holy Scripture is altogether Mystrious, Allegorical, and Enigmatical. The *Talmudists* are of Opinion that the Book of *Job* is no other than a Parable of the *Hebrews*.

Invention ; this Book, that of *David*, the *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, the *Canticles*, and all other Holy Songs, are Poetical Works abounding with Figures, which would seem bold and violent in our Writings, and which are frequent in those of that Nation. The Book of *Proverbs* is otherwise call'd the *Parables*, because Proverbs of this sort, according to the Definition of *Quintilian*, are only short Figures or Parables express'd in little.

The Book of *Canticles* is a kind of *Dramatic Poem*, where the passionate Sentiments of the Bridegroom and Spouse are expressed after a Manner so tender and touching, that we should

should be charmed and affected with it, if the Expression and Figures had a little more Conformity to our Genius; or if we could Divest our selves of Prejudice, which disposes us to dislike every Thing which is the least different from what we are used to; tho' by this Practice we condemn our selves without perceiving it, since our Lightness never permits us to continue long in the Approbation of any Thing.

Our Saviour himself scarce ever gave any Precepts to the *Jews* but under the Veil of Parables. The *Talmud* contains a Million of Fables, every one more Impertinent than the other; many of the Rabbins

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have

have since explained, illustrated, and digested them in their particular Works; and beside this have composed several Poems, Prologues and Apologues.

The *Cyprians* and *Cilicians* have invented certain Fables which bore the Name of the People of those Nations; and the particular Disposition of the *Cilicians* to Lying gave rise to one of the Ancientest Proverbs in *Greece*.

In short, Fables have been in such Vogue all over these Countries, that (according to the Testimony of *Lucian*,) there were particular Orders of Men among the *Assyrians* and *Arabians*, whose sole Province was to explain Fables; and who observed such a

Regularity

Regularity in their Life, that they extended it much farther than other People.

But it is not enough to have discovered *The Original of Romances*; we must see by what Streams they have spread and convey'd themselves into *Greece*, and *Italy*, and whether they have passed from thence to us; or we have received them from any other Nation. The *Ionians*, a People of *Asia Minor*, being raised to great Power, and having acquired vast Riches, immersed themselves into Luxury and Voluptuousness, and indulged themselves in all the Extravagancies of Plenty. novel yoll
of the world with the power of
the world of *Cyrus*

Cyrus subdued them by making *Craesus* his Captive, with whom he received all *Asia Minor* into his Subjection. The *Persians* upon this Success admitted their Manners with their Laws, and mixed their Debauches with those their own Inclinations supplied them with, and so grew to be the most Voluptuous Nation in the World. They began to refine upon the Pleasures of the Table, by making the Addition of Flowers and Perfumes. They first invented the Ornaments for their Houses. The finest Wools, and the richest Tapestries in the World were their Productions. They invented the lascivious Dance, call'd the *Ionic*; and became so remarkable for Effeminacy.

nacy, that it grew into a Proverb. But the *Milesians*, above all the rest, discover'd the indulging Temper, surpass'd them all in the Accuracy of their Pleasures, and shew'd the most singular Taste for Delicacies. They were the first who introduc'd the Art of Romancing among the *Persians*, when they had had such Success in it themselves, that the *Milesian* Fables, the same with Romances, full of Love Adventures, and Licentious Relations, advanced into the Highest Reputation: 'Tis probable Romances were Innocent 'till they fell into their Hands, and before recounted only singular and memorable Adventures.

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corrupted them, and fill
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are devoured by Time
hear of no more than *Amor*
them, who was the
mous of the Romance
wrote several Books
called the *Milesian Fables*.
find that one *Dionysius*
sian, who lived under the
of *Darius* the First, com-
some Fabulous Histori-
since I can't be certain
this was any more than
ling of Ancient Fables.
can't see sufficient Reason
lieve, that they could
be called *Milesian Fables*.

But

number him among the Writers of Romance.

The *Ionians*, descended from *Attica* and *Peloponnesus*, out of the Deference they had for their Original, maintain'd a great Correspondence with the *Greeks*. The Children of these Nations were sent from the one to the other for Education, that they might be the better acquainted with the Manners and Habit of Life of each other. By this Commerce *Greece*, which had of it self Inclination enough to Fables, learned the Art of Romances from the *Ionians*, and improved it with great Success. But to avoid Confusion, I shall endeavour to give an Account of those Writers amongst the *Greeks*,

Greeks, who have been most Famous in this Art according to the Times they lived in.

I find none before *Alexander* the Great, which perswades me, that the Romancing Science made no considerable Progress among the *Greeks* before their Conquest over the *Persians*, from whom they received it. *Clearchus* of *Soli*, a Town of *Cilicia*, who lived in *Alexander's* Time, and was with him a Disciple to *Aristotle*, is the first whom I observe to have wrote Books of Love, tho' I am not well assured whether these were not a Collection extracted from History or Vulgar Fable, like that which *Parthenius* composed under *Augustus*, which is yet Ex-
tant.

rant. That which confirms my Suspicion, is a little Story cited from him by *Athenæus*, which gives an Account of some Marks of Love and Esteem which Gyges, King of *Lydia*, expressed to one of his *Courtisans*.

Antonius Diogenes, (according to the Opinion of *Photius*) lived not long after *Alexander* ; and composed a true Romance of the Amours of *Dinias* and *Dercyllis*, in Imitation of the *Odyssæis* of *Homer* , and the Adventurous Voyages of *Ulysses*. This Romance, though very Imperfect in several Particulars, and stuffed with foolish and extravagant Relations, scarce excusable in a Poet , may nevertheless be called Regular. *Photius* has an
Abstract

Abstract of it in his *Bibliotheca*, and asserts it to be the Original of that which *Lucian*, *Lucius*, *Jamblichus*, *Achilles Tatius*, *Heliodorus*, and *Damascius*, have written in this Nature. However, he adds in the same Place, that *Antonius Diogenes* makes mention of one *Antiphanes* more Ancient than himself, who wrote a Book of wonderful Histories like his; so that we have the same Reason to believe, That he created the Idea and Institution of Romances, as that *Antonius Diogenes* did. I suppose he must be understood to speak of *Antiphanes* the Comic Poet, whom *Stephanus* the Geographer, and others, affirm to have composed a Collection of
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impertinent and incredible Relations. He was of *Berge*, a Town of *Thrace*; but we can have no Information of what Country *Antonius Diogenes* was.

I can't tell precisely in what Time *Aristides* of *Miletus* lived; but this we may be confident of, That it was before the Civil Wars of *Marinus* and *Sylla*; because *Sisenna*, a Roman Historian of that Time, translated his *Milesian Fables*. This Work was full of Obscenities, and upon that Account gave great Diversion to the Romans; so that the *Surenas*, or Lieutenant-General of the *Parthian* Government, who defeated the Roman Army, under *Crassus*, when he found them among the Baggage of

of *Roscins*, took Occasion before the Senate of *Seleucia* to insult and defame the tender and effeminate Disposition of the *Romans*, who in the time of War could not disengage themselves of so soft Entertainments.

Lucius of *Patras*, *Lucian* of *Samosata*, and *Jamblichus*, lived very near the same Time, under the Emperors *Antoninus*, and *Marcus Aurelius*. The first of them must not be reckoned among Romanizers, for he no more than collected some Metamorphoses of the Magical Transformation of Men into Beasts, and Beasts into Men; dealing very simply and fairly, since he believed all that he wrote. *Lucian*
with

with much more Policy and Judgment, relates some part of his Works only to expose and ridicule them, in the Book which he called *Lucius's Ass*; to intimate that the Fiction was originally his. 'Tis in Effect an Abbridgment of the two first Books of *Lucius's Metamorphosis*; and this Fragment lets us see, That *Photius* had great Reason to arraign and decry his obscene and smutty Expressions. This ingenious and celebrated *Ass*, whose History these Authors wrote, was extremely like another of the same Worth and Merit, which *Photius* speaks of from *Damascius* in this Manner: " This *Ass*, says he, was the
 " Beast of a Grammarian, na-
 " med

“ med *Ammonius*; of so gentle
 “ and tender a Disposition, so
 “ an admirable and polite a
 “ Taste, that it would gladly
 “ forsake its Food, to hear Ver-
 “ ses repeated, and be very sen-
 “ sibly touched with the Beau-
 “ ties and Strokes of Poetry ”.

The *Brancalion* is without doubt
 an Imitation of this *Ass* of *Lu-*
cius, or that of *Apuleius*. This
 is an *Italian* Fiction, very full
 of Elegance and Diversion.
Lucian, besides his *Lucius*, com-
 posed two Books of wild and
 extravagant Histories; which he
 declared to be such, and prote-
 sted that the Subjects of them
 were such as never had been,
 nor would be performed. Some
 observing that these Books were
 added

added to that which delivers Rules for Composing a good History ; infer that he intended it as an Example of what he had enjoined, tho' he himself declares in the Entrance of the Work , That he had no farther Design in it, than to expose those Poets , Historians , and Philosophers themselves , who exhibited Fiction for Truth with Impunity ; and wrote such Relations of Foreign Countries, as *Clesias* and *Jambulus* had done. Now if this be true which *Photius* assures us, That the Romance of *Antonius Diogenes* gave rise to these two of *Lucian* : We must understand that *Lucian* took Occasion from this, and the fabulous Histories of *Clesias* and *Jambulus*,

Jambulus, to compose his own, on purpose to detect and condemn the Vanity and Impertinence of theirs.

About this Time *Jamblichus* publish'd his *Babylonics*, (for that was the Name of it) in which he vastly outdid all who preceded him. For if we may judge of it by the Fragment which *Photius* has left us of it, his Design comprehends but one Action, adorned with all necessary Improvements ; and attended with Episodes , arising from the principal Subject. He has observed Verisimilitude most exactly ; his Adventures are mixed with Variety without Confusion : We can find Fault with nothing but want of Art in the Contrivance

vance of his Plot ; that he has not been strict in following the Order of Time ; and that he did not admit the Reader into the Middle of his Design at his first setting out, after the Example of *Homer* in his *Odysséis*. Time has been Favourable to this Piece, for it has been seen in the Library of the *Escurial*.

Heliodorus excell'd him in the Disposition of his Subject , and indeed in every other Particular. Hitherto the World had not seen any thing better designed, and more compleat in Romance, than the Adventures of *Theagenes* and *Chariclea* : Nothing can be more chaste than their Loves. By this it appears, (beside the Honour of the Christian Religion,

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gion,

gion, which he professed) that he had in his own Nature, such an Air of Virtue, as shines throughout the Work; in which not only *Jamblichus*, but almost all the rest, are much his Inferiours. His Merit advanc'd him to the Dignity of an Episcopal See: He was Bishop of *Tricca*, a City of *Thessaly*. *Socrates* reports, that he introduced into that Diocese, the Custom of Deposing such of the Clergy, as did not abstain from the Women they had contracted before their Admission into Orders. This makes me very much suspect what *Nicephorus*, a credulous Writer, of little Judgment or Sincerity, relates; That a Provincial Synod, understanding the

the Danger which the Reading of this Romance (so highly Authorised by the Dignity of its Author) might expose Young People to ; proposed, that he should either consent to the Burning of his Book, or the Resignation of his Bishoprick ; and that he accepted the latter of the Conditions. For the rest, I can't but admire, that a Learned Man of this Age should suspect, whether this was the Book of *Heliodorus*, Bishop of *Tricca*, or no ; after *Socrates*, *Photius*, and *Nicephorus*, had given such evident Testimonies of it. Some have been of Opinion, that he lived about the End of the Twelfth Age ; confounding him with *Heliodorus* the *Arabian*, whose

Life *Philostratus* has writ, among those of the other Sophists. But it is known, that he was Cotemporary with *Arcadius* and *Honorius* ; and we find in *Photius's* Catalogue of the Romancers, who he thought wrote in Imitation of *Antonius Diogenes*, where he names them in a Chronological Order ; he has placed *Heliodorus* after *Jamblichus*, and before *Damascius* ; who lived in the Time of the Emperor *Justinian*.

According to this Account, *Achilles Tatius*, who wrote a Regular Romance of the Amours of *Clitophon* and *Leucippe*, ought to have preceded ; tho' I can find no certain Account, to justify my Opinion. Others think
him

him more recent in his Style :
 However, he is not to be compared to *Heliodorus* , either for the Regularity of his Manners, the Variety of Events , or the Artifice of Unravelling his Plots. Indeed his Style is to be preferr'd to that of *Heliodorus* , because 'tis more Simple and Natural ; whereas the other's is more forced. Some say , that he was a Christian , and a Bishop too. 'Tis strange , that the Obscenity of his Book should be so easily forgot ; and more so , that the Emperor *Leo* , surnamed the *Philosopher* , should commend the Modesty of it , in an Epigram which is yet extant ; and not only permit , but recommend the Reading of it with the closest

fest Application, to all those who profess the Love of Chastity.

I am afraid I shall be impleaded of Rashness, if I assign the next Place to *Athenagoras*, under whose Name there goes a Romance, the Title of which is, *Of True and Perfect Love*. This Book has not appeared in any Language but *French*, of *Fumee's* Translation; who tells us in his Preface, that he had the *Greek* Original from Mr. *de Lamane*, Prothonotary of the Cardinal *d' Armagnac*; and that he never saw it elsewhere. I almost dare add, 'twas never seen since; for the Name of it was never mention'd, that I know of, in the Catalogues of any

any Libraries; and if it is at all in Being, 'tis buried among Dust in the Closet of some Illiterate Person, who possesses the Treasure, and knows not of it; or else 'tis in the Hands of the Invidious, who won't oblige the Publick with it; tho' 'twould not be in the least to their Disadvantage. The Translator adds further, that he believes it to be the Production of that Famous *Athenagoras*, who writ the Apology for the Christian Religion, in the Manner of a Legation, (and address'd it to the Emperors *Marcus Aurelius*, and *Commodus*) and another Treatise of the Resurrection. The chief Reason for his Opinion, is the Conformity of his Style; which

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he had a good Opportunity to judge of, because he had the Originals before him. He takes it for a True Story, not understanding the Art of Romances. For my part, tho' I can't pronounce of it with Certainty, because I have not seen the Original in *Greek* ; yet the Reading the Translation, inclines me to think, that he had several sufficient Grounds, to assign the Author of it to be *Athenagoras* the Apologist. For the Apologist was a Christian ; and this speaks of Divinity, after a manner very inconsistent with any, but one of that Profession : As when he makes the Priests of *Ammon* declare, " That there is but One
" God ; and that every Nation
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“ desirous to represent his Ef-
 “ sence to the Simple, had in-
 “ vented several Images, which
 “ expressed but the same Thing.
 “ That their true Signification
 “ being defaced by Time, the
 “ Vulgar believed there were
 “ so many Gods, as they saw
 “ Images : That this was the O-
 “ riginal of Idolatry. That
 “ *Bacchus*, when he built the
 “ Temple of *Ammon*, placed in
 “ it no other Image than that of
 “ God ; because as there is but
 “ One in Heaven, which con-
 “ tains but One World ; in this
 “ World there is but One God,
 “ who is communicated in Spi-
 “ rit.

He makes this, and much more, said by some *Ægyptian*

Merchants, " That the Gods in
 " the Fable, denoted the diffe-
 " rent Operations of this Sove-
 " reign, and only One Divini-
 " ty, who is without Begin-
 " ning, and without End :
 Whom he calls Obscure, and
 Dark, because he is Invisible,
 and Incomprehensible. Farther;
 the Discourses of the Priests and
 Merchants, upon the Divine
 Essence, very much resemble
 those of *Athenagoras*, in his Le-
 gation. The Apologist was a
 Priest of *Athens*; this was an
Athenian Philosopher; Both seem
 Men of Sense, and Learning,
 and great Penetration into Anti-
 quity.

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But on the other side, we have many Reasons to suspect, not only that this is not *Athenagoras* the Christian, but that the Book it self is a mere Forgery.

Photius, giving an Exact Account of the Composers of Romances before his Time, takes no Notice of him at all. Nobody ever saw a Copy of this Work in any Library; and that which the Translator made use of, never appear'd since. Besides, he represents the Habitation, Life, and Conduct of the Priests and Religious of *Ammon*, so very like the Convents and Government of our Monks and Friars, that it ill accords with what History informs us,
of

of the Time when the Monastic Life began, and when it arrived to Perfection.

Among all this Obscurity, what seems most probable to me, is, that 'tis an Ancient Work, but of a later Date than the Apology.

For I observe such a Profound Knowledge, both in Matters of Nature and Art; so great an Intimacy with the Annals of Time past, so many Curious Remarks, not taken from Ancient Authors which are left us, but which relate to, and explain them; so much of the *Greek* Phrase, which one may discover throughout the Translation; and over all, a certain Character of Antiquity, which cannot be
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counterfeited ; that I can't be persuaded that it is any Production of *Fumee's*, whose Learning was but indifferent ; or that the most Able and Ingenious Person in those Days, could devise any Thing like it. If *Photius* hath not mentioned him ; how many other Great and Famous Authors have escaped his Cognisance, or his Diligence ! If in our Days only one Copy was found , which perhaps is since lost ; how many other Excellent Works have undergone the same Destiny ! If this fails of giving you Satisfaction , and you'll oblige me to extend my Conjectures, and attempt to find out the Precise Time of its Production ; I have nothing left to
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support my Opinion, but one Passage in the Preface to the Work; where he complains of the fatal Blow his Country *Athens* was about to receive, in the General Desolation of *Greece*; which can't be understood, but of the Irruption of the *Scythians* into *Greece*, which happen'd under the Empire of *Gallicenus*; or else that of *Alarie*, King of the *Goths*, which fell out in the Time of *Arcadius* and *Honorius*. For *Athens* was not sack'd since *Sylla's* Time, till the Invasion of the *Scythians*, which was about Three Hundred and fifty Years after, which preceded that of the *Goths* the same Term of Years. But I see more Reason to apply the Words of the Author to
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the Conquest of *Alaric* ; because the *Scythians* were soon repulsed from *Athens* , before they had done much Mischief ; but the *Goths* treated them with much more Rudeness, and left behind them sad Instances of their Barbarous Cruelty. *Synesius* , who lived at that Time , speaks of them in the same Terms with our Author ; and , with him, laments to see Learning, and the Liberal Sciences, ravaged by the *Barbarians* , in the very Place of their Birth , and Seat of their Empire. However, this Work, which bears the Name of *Athenagoras* , is invented with Wit, conducted with Art, Sententious, and full of Excellent Moral Precepts. The Events agree with

with Verisimilitude ; the Episodes are drawn from the Subject ; the Characters clear and distinct : *Decorum* is exactly preserved throughout : Nothing low ; nothing forced, or like the Pedantic Style of the Sophists.

The Argument is double ; (which makes one of the great Beauties of our Modern Comedy) for besides the Adventure of *Theagenes* and *Chariclea*, he delivers that of *Pherecydes* and *Malangenia* ; which evinces the Mistake of *Giraldi*, who believed the Multiplying of Actions was the Invention of the *Italians* ; whereas the *Greeks*, and our Old *French*, have practised it before them. The first, with Dependence and Subordination
to

to one Principal Action, follow the Rules of an Heroick Poem; as *Athenagoras* and *Heliodorus* have done, tho' not so accurately: But our Old *French* have multiplied them without Order, Connexion, or Art. These the *Italians* have imitated, borrowing of them their Romances, with their Imperfections. Here we find *Giraldi* in a worse Error than the former: He endeavours to commend this Vice, and turn it into a Virtue: Whereas, if it be true what himself asserts, that a Romance should resemble a Perfect Body, and consist of many different Parts and Proportions all under one Head; it follows, that the Principal Action of a Romance should be

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Simple and Illustrious, above the rest; that the Subordinate ones, which are as it were the Members, ought to have Relation to this Head, yield to it in Dignity and Beauty, adorn, sustain, and attend it with Dependance; otherwise it would be a Body with many Heads, Monstrous, and Deformed. The Example of *Ovid*, alledged in his Favour, and that of other *Cyclic* Poets, which might be cited for the same Purpose, does not justify him at all: For the *Metamorphoses* of the Ancient Fable, which *Ovid* proposed to amass into one Poem, consisting all of Actions which have no Dependance or Relation one to the other; and being all very near of an Equal

qual Beauty and Eminence; 'twas as impossible to digest them into one Regular Body, as 'twould be to erect a Compleat Structure with no Materials but Sand. The Applause which the Faulty Romances of his Nation have receiv'd, does yet justify him the less: We are not to judge of a Performance by the Number, but Sufficiency of the Approbators. Every one assumes to himself the License to judge of, and censure Poësie and Romance: The Sumptuous Palaces and Common Streets are made Tribunals, where the Merits of the Greatest Works receive a Supreme Decision. There every one shoots his Bolt, and boldly presumes to set an Estimate of

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an Epic Poem, upon the Reading a Single Comparison, or Description. One Verse a little harsh, which the Subject or Place does sometimes require, destroys the Reputation of the Whole. One Happy Thought, or Tender Sentiment, makes the Fortune of a Romance : One Expression, or one Superannuated Word, defaces it. But the Authors of them won't stand to these Determinations ; but (like the Comedian in *Horace*, who, when he was hissed off the Stage by the People, was satisfied with the Approbation of a few Understanding Persons) they are content if they please the Nicest and most Able Judges, who are directed to pass Sentence by other

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Kind of Rules; which are known to so few, that (as I have already observed) a Good Judge is as rarely to be found as a Good Romancer, or a Good Poet: And that in the small Number of those who understand, and can judge of Prose, we can hardly find one, who understands Poetry, and who is convinc'd of the vast Difference between that Art and Prose. These Critics, whose Sentence is the certain Rule to value Poems or Romances by, did concede to *Giraldi*, that the *Italian* Romances have many Good Things in them, and deserve many other Commendations, but not those of Regularity, Contrivance, or Justness of Design.

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I return to the Romance of *Athenagoras*; where the Discovery of the Plot, tho' without Machine, is less happy than the rest; it goes not off smartly enough; it presents it self, before the Passion and Impatience of the Reader are sufficiently warmed, and is made with too much Repetition. But his greatest Fault is his Extravagant Ostentation, with which he displays his Skill in Architecture. What he writes, might be Admirable elsewhere, but is Vicious and Impertinent where he disposes it. "For a Poet, saith *Giraldi*, ought not, in describing a Fabric, to shew himself an Architect; for in taking Notice of Particulars
 " be

“ belonging to that Art, he
 “ leaves what is properly a Po-
 “ et’s Business, which he ought
 “ principally to regard, if he
 “ expects Commendation: Be-
 “ sides, such Mechanic Descrip-
 “ tions debase the Work, are
 “ too mean, and far below the
 “ Grandeur and Magnificence of
 “ an Heroic Poem.

He has taken many Things
 from *Heliodorus*, or *Heliodorus*
 from him; for as I believe them
 Cotemporaries, I can’t determine
 to which of them the Glory of
 the Invention ought to be ascri-
 bed. The Names and Chara-
 cters of *Theogenes* and *Charidea*,
 resemble those of *Theagenes* and
Chariclea: *Theogenes* and *Chari-*
dea see, and fall in Love with
 each

each other, at a Feast of *Minerva*; as *Theagenes* and *Chariclea* do at the Feast of *Apollo*. *Athenagoras* makes one *Harondates* Governor of the Lower *Ægypt*: *Heliodorus* makes *Oroondates* Governor of *Ægypt*. *Athenagoras* feigns *Theogenes* ready to be sacrificed by the *Scythians*: *Heliodorus* makes *Theagenes* about to be a Victim to the *Æthiopians*: And *Athenagoras*, like *Heliodorus*, has disposed his Work into Ten Books.

I shall not place the Books of *Paradoxes* of *Damascius*, an Hea-then Philosopher, who lived under *Justinian*, among the Number of Romances. For tho' *Photius* observes, that he imitated *Antonius Diogenes*, the Model of
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Greek Romancers ; 'tis to be understood, that like him he composed Histories, Fabulous and Incredible, but not Romantic, nor after the manner of Romances : For he related only the Apparitions of Spectres, and Goblins, and Events above Nature, either too lightly to be credited, or invented with little Address, becoming the Atheism and Impiety of the Author.

Two Years after *Damascius*, was the History of *Barlaam* and *Josaphat*, composed by St. *John Damascenus*. Many Ancient Manuscripts ascribe it to *John* the *Sinaite*, who lived in the Time of *Theodosius* ; but without Reason, as *Billins* makes it appear ; because the Disputes against the

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Iconoclasts, which are inserted in this Work, were not moved at that Time, nor long after, by *Leo Isauricus* the Emperor, under whom *St. John Damascenus* lived. 'Tis a Romance, but a Spiritual one: It treats of Love; but 'tis the Love of God: We there find much Bloodshed; but 'tis the Blood of Martyrs: It is written in the Form of an History, not according to the Rules of a Romance; tho' Verisimilitude is exactly enough observed. It bears with it so many Marks of Fiction, that it is not to be read, but with some little Judgment to discover it. In the other Particulars of it, one may detect the Fabulous *Genius* of the Author's Nation, by the great

great Number of Parables, Comparisons, and Similitudes, which are very liberally dispersed in it.

The Romance of *Theodorus Prodromus*, and that which some attribute to *Eustathius* Bishop of *Thessalonica*, who flourished in the Empire of *Manuel Comnenus*, about the Middle of the Twelfth Age, are much of the same Nature. The first contains the Amours of *Dosicles* and *Rhodante*; the other, those of *Asmenas* and *Ismene*. Monsieur *Gaulmen* has made both of them Public, with his Translation, and Notes. He says nothing of *Eustathius*, in the Preface to the Book which bears that Name: I'll interpret his Silence in his Favour; and

believe, that that Ingenious Man could not fall into the Error of those, who persuade themselves, that the Learned and Famous Commentator upon *Homer*, was capable of writing such a Miserable Work as this. Besides, some Manuscripts read the Author *Eumathius*, and not *Eustathius*. However that be, nothing is more frigid, empty, and impertinent : No *Decorum*, no Verisimilitude, no Conduct is preserved. 'Tis the Work of some School-boy, or wretched Pedagogue, who deserved to be a School-boy all the Days of his Life.

Theodorus Prodromus is little better; however, he has something more of Art; tho' it be scarce-

scarcely perceivable. He never extricates himself, but by Machinery. He understands not how to make his Actors preserve the Justness and Uniformity of their Characters. His Work is rather a Poem, than a Romance, for it is writ in Verse; and this makes his Style (which is too Licentious, and full of Figures) the more pardonable: But since his Verse is *Iambic*, which is extremely like Prose, I can't exclude him from it. Some say he was a *Russian* by Birth, a Priest, a Poet, a Philosopher, and a Physician.

My Judgment upon the Pastorals of *Longus* the Sophist, is the same with that I gave of the Two former Romances. For

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tho' the Learned of Late Times have commended them for their Elegance and Agreement, joined to a Simplicity proper to the Nature of the Subjects ; yet I can observe nothing in it, but that Simplicity, which sometimes declines to Childishness and Impertinence. There is nothing in it of Invention, or Conduct. He begins grossly in the Birth of his Shepherds, and ends with their Marriage. He never clears up his Adventures, but by Machines improper, and ill contrived. His Expressions are so obscene, that one must be somewhat of a *Cynic*, to read them without Blushing. His Style does not deserve the Commenda-

tion of the Learned. The following are the

dations it receives. 'Tis the Style of a Sophist, such as he was ; like that of *Enstathius*, and *Theodorus Prodromus*, which partakes of the Orator and Historian, tho' it be proper for neither of them. 'Tis full of *Metaphors*, *Antitheses*, *Figures*, which dazzle and surprize the Simple, and tickle the Ear, without satisfying the Mind ; instead of Engaging the Reader, by the Novelty of Events, the Arrangement and Variety of Matter, a clear and close Narration, attended by a smooth and regular Cadence, which always advances within the Subject.

He endeavours (as all Sophists do) to entertain his Reader with *Accidental Descriptions* :

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ous :

ons : He leads him out of the way ; and while he admits him so far into a Country he did not look for, he spends and exhausts the Attention and Impatience he had to arrive at the End he proposed. I translated this Romance, when I was a Child ; which is the only Age it will please. I shall not tell you in what Time he liv'd : None of the Ancients have made Mention of him ; and he bears no Indication to encourage any Opinion, unless it be the Purity of his Style ; which makes me believe him more Ancient than the Two former.

For the Three *Xenophons*, who were Romancers ; which *Suidas* speaks of ; I can say no more than

than he has done : That one of them was of *Antioch* ; another of *Ephesus* ; the Third of *Cyprus* : All of them wrote Love-Stories. The first gave his Book the Name of *Babylonics* ; the Second entitled his the *Ephesiacs* , and relates the Amours of *Habrecomas* and *Anthea* ; the Third named his the *Cypriacs* ; where he recounts the Amours of *Cynaras* , *Myrrha* , and *Adonis* .

I ought not to forget *Parthenius* of *Nicaea* , from whom we receive a Collection of Love-Histories , which he inscribes to the Poet *Cornelius Gallus* , in the Reign of *Augustus* . Many of them are drawn from the Ancient Fable , and all from Ancient

Authors, which he cites. Some of them seem to be Romantic, and to have been extracted from the *Milesian* Fables ; as that of *Erippe* and *Zanthus*, in the Eighth ; that of *Polycrites* and *Diognete*, in the Ninth ; that of *Luconoc* and *Cyanippe*, in the Tenth ; that of *Nexra* and *Hypsireon*, and *Promedon*, in the Eighteenth Chapters. For besides that these Adventures are ascribed to *Milesian* Persons, it does not at all appear, that they have been taken either from the Fable, or Ancient History. The same may be said of the Amours of *Cannus* and *Biblis*, Children of the Founder of *Miletus*, which he reports in the Eleventh Chapter. They are a Fiction of the Coun-

Countrey which have made it Famous, and have consecrated it in the Ancient Mythology. This however I offer, as a slight Conjecture.

In my Account, I distinguish the Regular Romances, from those which are not so. I call those Regular, which are composed after the Rules of an Heroic Poem.

The Greeks, who have so happily improved most Arts and Sciences, that they may be reckoned the First Inventors of them, have also cultivated the Art of Romances. They have reform'd it from the Rude Dress it appeared in among the *Oriental*s : They have reduced it into a more Regular Shape, adjusting it

it to the Rules of the *Epopee*, and joining those Different Parts into One Compleat Body, which made up the Romances of former Times, without Order or Disposition. Of all the Greek Romancers I have named, they who observed these Rules, are only *Antonius Diogenes*, *Lucian*, *Athenagoras*, *Jamblichus*, *Heliodorus*, *Achilles Tatius*, *Eustathius*, and *Theodorus Prodromus*. I don't mention *Lucius* of *Patras*, nor *Damascius*, whom I have not enrolled among the Authors of Romances. *St. John Damascenus*, and *Longus*, might easily have reduced their Works under these Laws; but they either were ignorant of them, or despised them. I can't affirm
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any Thing of the Three *Xenophons*, because we have nothing of them left us. Neither can I assert any Thing of *Aristides*, and those who followed him in Composing the *Milesian Fables*. I believe however, these latter confined themselves to some Rules or Measures, which I observed in the Works Time has preserv'd to us, which were wrote in Imitation of them, as the *Metamorphosis* of *Apuleius*, which is regular enough.

These *Milesian Fables* had been transported into *Italy*, long before they had made this Progress in *Greece*. They were first received among the *Sybarites*, a People Voluptuous to the highest Extravagance. This Conformity.

formity of Humour which they had with the *Milesians*, established a reciprocal Commerce of Luxury and Pleasure, and united them so well, that *Herodotus* assures us, he knew no People so strictly allied. They then learned of the *Milesians* the Art of Fiction; so that the *Sybaritic* Fables were as common in *Italy*, as the *Milesian* were in *Asia*. It is not easy to determine what was their Model: *Hesychius* informs us, in one Passage very much corrupted, that *Æsop* being in *Italy*, his Fables were so very well received there, that the People improved upon them; and when they had alter'd them, named them *Sybaritics*; so that they became

came a Proverb : But he does not discover wherein the Alteration consisted. *Suidas* believed, they were like those of *Æsop* ; but he is mistaken in this, as well as many other Places. The Old Commentator upon *Aristophanes* saith, That the *Sybarites* made use of *Beasts* in their Fables, and *Æsop* of *Men* in his. This Passage is certainly corrupted : For as it appears that *Æsop*'s Fables employed *Beasts*, it follows, that those of the *Sybarites* made use of *Men*. He informs us in express Terms, in another Place, that those of the *Sybarites* were pleasant, and provoked Laughter. I find a Piece of one of them in *Ælian*. 'Tis a little Story, which he saith he took

took from the History of the *Sybarites* ; (I suppose he means their Fables) You may judge of them by the Story it self.

A Child of Sybaris going to School along with his Master, met in the Street one that sold Figs , and stole one of them from him : The Master chiding him , snatches the Fig from him, and eats it.

These Fables were not only facetious , but smutty. Ovid places the *Sybaritida*, which were composed not long before his Time , among the most Lascivious Performances. Many Learned Men believe, that he intends the

the Work of *Hemitheon* the *Sybarite*, which *Lucian* speaks of, as a Mass of Smuttiness. This appears to have no Ground : For one can't imagine, that the *Sybaritida* agreed with the Book of *Hemitheon*, in any thing more than the equal Obscenity of them both ; and this was common to all the *Sybaritic* Fables. Besides this, the *Sybaritida* were composed not long before *Ovid*'s Time ; whereas the Town *Sybaris* was demolish'd by the *Crotoniates* Five Hundred Years before him : So that 'tis more credible, that the *Sybaritida* were composed by some *Roman*, and received that Name, because they were composed in Imitation of the *Sybaritic* Fables. A
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certain old Author, whose Name I believe you don't much value, gives us to understand, that their Style was concise and *Laconic* ; but all this doth not convince, that they had nothing of the Romance in them.

This Passage of *Ovid* makes it clear, that in his Time, the *Romans* had given Admittance to the Fables of the *Sybarites* : And he informs us in the same Book, that the Famous Historian *Sisenna* had translated it from the *Milesian* Fables of *Aristides*. This *Sisenna* lived in *Sylla's* Time, and was (with Him) of the Great and Illustrious Family of the *Cornelians*. He was *Prætor* of *Sicily* and *Achaia* ; wrote the History of his Country, and
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was preferred to all the Authors of his Nation; who went before him.

If the *Roman* Commonwealth disdained not the Reading of these Fables, while it retained an Austere Discipline, and Rigid Manners; 'tis no wonder, when it was reduced under the Power of Emperors, and was abandon'd by the Influence of their Example, to Luxury and Pleasure, if it was infected with the Vices which Romance instills into the Mind.

Virgil, who lived a little after the first Rise of the Empire, entertains the *Naiades*, Daughters of *Proteus*, when they were assembled under their Father's Wayes, with no other Amusement,

ment, than a Relation of the Amours of the Gods; which were the Subject of the Romances of Antiquity.

Ovid, *Virgil's* Cotemporary, makes the Daughters of *Minyas* tell Romantic Tales; giving a Laxation to their Tongues and Wit, when their Hands were employed. The first is, of the Loves of *Pyramus* and *Thisbe*; the Second, those of *Mars* and *Venus*; the Third is, of those of *Salmacis* for *Hermaphrodite*.

Hence appears the Esteem Romances had in *Rome*; which is more evident, by the Romance which *Petronius* (one of their Consuls, and the most polished Man of his Time) composed. He disposed it into the
Form

Form of a *Satyr*, of the same Kind which *Varro* invented, intermixing Prose with Verse, the Serious with the Jocosè, and stiled it *Menippean*; because *Menippus* had before treated of Serious Matters in a Pleasant Style.

This *Satyr* of *Petronius* fails not to be a True Romance: It contains nothing but diverting and ingenious Fictions; tho' they are sometimes too licentious and immodest. He hides under a Disguise a fine and poinant Rail-lery, against the Vices of *Nero's* Court. What remains of it, are only some incoherent Fragments, or rather Collections of some industrious Person; so that one can't exactly discern the

the Form and Connexion of the whole Piece ; tho' it appears to be conducted with Order. And 'tis probable those incoherent Parts, would compose a very Compleat Body, with the Addition of those which are lost. Tho' *Petronius* seems to be a very great Critic, and of an exquisite Taste in Learning ; his Style does not alway advance to the Delicacy of his Judgment : Something of Affectation may be observed. In some Places he's too Florid and Adorned ; and degenerates from that Natural and Majestic Simplicity, which shined in the *Augustan* Age. So true is it, that the Art of Speaking ; which is practised by all the World, (and what

what very Few understand) is yet much easier to be understood, than practised well.

Some say, the Poet *Lucan* (who also lived in the Reign of *Nero*) composed *Saltic Fables*; wherein (some think) were recounted the Intrigues of *Satyrs* and *Nymphs*. This agrees well with a Romance, and the Wit of that Age, which was very much inclined to the Amusements of that Art. But since there is nothing left us of it but the Title, and that does not clearly express the Nature of the Work; I shall say nothing of it.

The *Metamorphosis* of *Apuleius*, so well known by the Name of the *Golden Ass*, was
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composed under the *Antonines*. It had the same Original with the *Ass* of *Lucian* ; since it was extracted from the Two first Books of *Lucius* of *Patras* : But there is this Difference between them ; that these Books were abridged by *Lucian* , and augmented by *Apuleius*. The Work of this Philosopher is Regular : For altho' he seems to begin with his Infancy ; yet what is there said , is only by way of Preface, and to excuse the Barbarity of his Style. The true Beginning of his History , is at his Voyage into *Thessalia*. He has given us an Idea of the *Milesian* Fables in this Piece, which he declares to be of the same Sort. He has enriched it with
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had commended him for a Learned Man ; whereas he attended to nothing but the *Milesian* Fables of *Apuleius*, and spent all his Study in Old Women's Tales, and such other Trifles, and preferred them to more Serious Employments.

Martianus Capella has (like *Petronius*) given the Name of Satyr to his Work ; because (like his) 'tis written in Verse and Prose ; and the Profitable and Entertaining Parts are very agreeably interwoven. His Design is to treat of the Arts which have the Appellation of Liberal. Thence he takes a round-about Occasion, to confer a Person upon each of them ; and supposing that *Mercury* (who
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is attended by them) espouses *Philology*, (which is the Love of Good Letters) he gives her whatever is Excellent in them, for a Nuptial Present : So that it is a continued Allegory, which properly does not deserve the Name of a Romance, but rather that of a Fable. For, as I have already observed, a Fable represents Things which never have, or ever can happen ; and a Romance takes Notice of Things which may, but never have happen'd. The Artifice of this Allegory is not very subtle ; the Style is Barbarism it self ; so bold and extravagant in its Figures, that they are unpardonable in the most Desperate Poet. 'Tis disguised with so great an

Obscurity, that 'tis hardly intelligible ; otherwise 'tis Learned, and full of Notions which are not common.

Some write, that the Author was an *African* : If he was not, his harsh and forced Style would induce one to believe he was of that Country. The Time he lived in is unknown : It only appears he was more Ancient than *Justinian*.

Hitherto the Art of Roman-cing was maintained with some Splendor, but it soon decayed with Learning and the Empire ; when the Furious Nations of the *North* disseminated, with their Bodies, the Ignorance and Barbarity of their Minds. Roman-ces were hitherto composed for
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Delight. Fabulous Histories were now introduced, because none were acquainted with the Truth. *Talieffin*, who lived about the Middle of the Sixth Age, under that King *Arthur* so famous in Romances ; and *Melkin*, who was somewhat younger, writ the History of *England*, his Country, of King *Arthur*, and the *Round Table*. *Balans*, who has put them in his Catalogue, speaks of them, as of Authors filled with Fables. The same may be said of *Hunibaldus Francus*, who (as some relate) was Cotemporary with *Clovis*, and whose History is no other but a Mass of Lies grossly conceived.

E 3

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In fine, Sir, we come to the Famous Book of the Exploits of *Charlemagne* ; which some, with very little Reason, ascribe to the Archbishop *Turpin*, tho' he lived above Two Hundred Years after the Transactions he relates. *Pigna*, and some others, believe, ridiculously, that Romances took their Name from the Town of *Rheims*, whereof he was Archbishop ; because his Book (as *Pigna* relates) was the Original from whence the Romances of *Provence* are derived ; and because, according to others, he was one of the Principal Writers of Romances.

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However, there are many Histories of the Life of *Charlemagne*, full of Extravagant Fables, like that of *Turpin*. Such were the Histories attributed to *Harcon*, and to *Solcon Forteman*, to *Savard* the Sage, to *Adell Adeling*, and to *John*, Son of the King of the *Friezelanders*. All of them were of that Nation ; and are said to have lived in the Time of *Charlemagne*. Such also was the History attributed to *Occon* ; who, according to the common Opinion, was Cotemporary with *Otho* the Great, and had *Solcon* beforementioned for his Great Uncle. Such were those which contained the Achievements of King *Arthur*, and the Life of *Merlin*.

E 4

These

These Diverting Histories pleased the Readers, who were more ignorant than those who composed them. They did not, in those Days, trouble themselves with Researches into Antiquity, and after being informed of the Truth of what they wrote. They had the Stuff in their own Head, and went no farther than their own Invention. Thus Historians degenerated into True Romancers.

In this Age of Ignorance, the *Latin* Tongue, as well as Truth, was neglected and despised. The Versifiers, Composers, Inventors of Tales, Jesters, and in short, all of this Country who studied what they called the *Gay Science*, began about the Time of *Hugh*
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Capet, to set upon Romancing with great Fury ; and soon over-ran *France* , by dispersing them. These Fables were composed in the *Roman* Tongue : For formerly, those of *Provence* had more Learning and Poesy among them , than all *France* besides. This *Roman* Tongue was that which the *Romans* introduced into *Gaul* , with their Conquests. This was corrupted by Time, and the Admission of the *Gaulish* Language , which was before, amongst it : So that the *French*, or *Tudesque*, which followed, was neither *Latin*, *Gaulish*, nor *French* , but a Medley of them all. However, the *Latin* was predominant in it ; and for that Reason, it continued to

be called the *Roman*, to distinguish it from the Particular and Natural Language of each Country ; as the *French*, *Gaulish*, or *Celtique Aquitanic*, *Belgic*. For *Cæsar* writes, that these Three Languages were different among themselves ; which *Strabo* explains, as different Dialects of the same Language.

The *Spaniards* use the Word *Romance* in the same Signification with us, and call their ordinary Language by that Name. The *Romain* being then most universally understood, those of *Provence* who apply'd themselves to Fictions, made use of it in their Writings, which from thence were called *Romances*. The *Versifiers* travelled about the.

the Country, and were very well rewarded for their Labours, and nobly entertained by Persons of Quality whom they visited. Some of them would be so transported with Hearing their Performances repeated, that they would divest themselves of their Robes, to adorn the Poets with them. Those of *Provence* were not the only Persons who delighted in this Agreeable Amusement ; almost every County in *France* had their Romancers, even as far as *Picardy*, which produced their *Servantois*, Pieces treating of Love in a Satyrical way.

From hence proceed the prodigious Number of Old Romances, some in Print; others rotting in Private Libraries, the rest

destroyed.

destroyed by the Length of Time. *Spain* it self, and *Italy*, which have been so fruitful in Roman-ces, received the Art of Com-posing them from us. *Giraldi* himself reports, “ I may say, “ this Sort of Poesy had its first “ Original from the *French*, and “ perhaps had its Name from “ thence. From them it after- “ wards passed to the *Spani- “ ards* ; and last of all, it was “ received by the *Italians*.

The late *Salmasius* , whose Memory I have in singular Ve-neration , both for his Great Learning , and the Friendship contracted between us ; was of Opinion, that *Spain* having learn- ed the Art of Romancing from the *Arabians*, did by their Exam-
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ple communicate it to the rest of *Europe*. But to admit this, we must assent, that *Talieffin* and *Melkin*, both *English*, and *Hunnibaldus Francus*, (which are all of them believed to have composed their Romances about the Year 550) are more recent, by almost 200 Years, than we can imagine. For the Revolt of Count *Julian*, and Entrance of the *Arabians* into *Spain*, happened not till 91 of the *Hegira*, or 712 of our Saviour; and some Time must be allowed for the Diffusing of these Romances into *Spain*, and for those which (as is pretended) the *Spaniards* made in Imitation of them; to be dispersed throughout *Europe*. I shall not take upon me to main-

maintain the Antiquity of these Writers, tho' I have great Authority to do it, because the common and received Opinion would support me. 'Tis certain that the *Arabians* were extremely addicted, as I have made appear, to the *Gay Science*, I mean, Poesy, Fable, and Fiction. This Science was preserv'd in its Primitive Rudeness by them, till it was cultivated and improved by the *Greeks*. They brought it along with their Arms into *Africa*, when they subdued it; tho' it had before flourished in that Country: For *Aristotle*, and after him *Priscian*, make mention of the *Libyc Fables*; and the Romances of *Apuleius* and *Martianus Capella*,

both *Africans*, (of whom I have spoken) shew, that it was the Wit of these People, which very much conduced to fortify the Victorious *Arabians* in their Inclination.

We are farther inform'd from *Leo Afer* and *Marmol*, that the *African Arabians* do still passionately love Romantic Poesy; that they celebrate the Exploits of their *Buhala* in Verse and Prose, as we do those of our *Arthur* and *Lancelot*; that their *Moabites* compose Ditties of Love: That in *Fez*, on *Mahomet's* Birth-Day, the Poets have their Assemblies and Public Sports, and repeat Verses to the People: That whoever of them has the Approbation of the Auditors,

tors , is created Prince of the Poets for that Year : That the Kings of the House of *Benimerinis*, who have Reigned these Three Hundred Years, and which our Old Writers called *Bellemarine*, convene on a certain Day every Year the most Able Judges of the City of *Fez*, and entertain them with a Splendid Feast : after which the Poets repeat their *Eulogiums*, in Honour of *Mahomet* : That the King confers on him who excels the rest, a Sum of Money, an Horse, a Slave, and the Robes which himself wore that Day ; and that none of them are dismissed without a Reward.

Spain

Spain, when it had received the Yoke of the *Arabians*, learnt with their Manners the Custom of Singing Love-Verses, and Celebrating the Actions of Great Men, after the Institution of the *Bards* among the *Gauls*. But these Songs, which they called Romances, were very different from what properly deserves that Name : For they were Poems composed for Singing, and consequently very concise. Some have made Collections of them ; and many of them appear to be so very Ancient, that they can hardly be understood. They have sometimes served to illustrate and explain the Histories of that Country, and to reduce the Events to the Order of Chronology.

nology. Their Romances are much more modern, and not near of so old a Date, as our *Sir Tristram's* and *Sir Lancelot's*, by some Centuries of Years. *Miguel de Cervante*, one of the Best Wits *Spain* has produced, made a Fine and Judicious Critic in his *Don Quixote*: the Curate of *Mancha*, and *Nicholas the Barber* could scarce find, in so vast a Number, above Six which were worthy to be preserved: The rest are deliver'd to the Secular Arm of the Old Wife, to be committed to the Cruelty of the Flames. Those which they thought deserved to be kept, were the Four Books of *Amadis de Gaul*; which is said to

to be the first Romance of Chivalry which was printed in *Spain*, and the Model, and Best of all the other.

Palmerin of England, which some believe was composed by a King of *Portugal*, met with an Easy Sentence, to be put in a Box like that of *Darius*, wherein *Alexander* kept the Works of *Homer*. *Don Belianis*, the Mirror of Chivalry, *Tirante the White*, and *Kyrie Elcison of Montauban*, (for in those Good Old Times it was believed, that *Kyrie Elcison*, and *Paralipomenon*, were the Names of some Saints) where the Subtleties of *Madam Pleasure-of-my-Life*, and the Love and Intrigues of the *Widow Reposada*, are highly

ly extolled. But all this is Modern, if compared to the Old Romances, which were in all Probability the Models and Originals of these, as the Conformity of the Works, and Nearness of the Nation may persuade. He also gives his Censure upon the Romances in Verse, and other Poems found in the Library of *Don Quixot*; but this is foreign to our Subject.

If any object, that as we received the Art of Rhyming from the *Arabians*, 'tis credible we had the Art of Romances from them; since the greatest Part of our Old Romances were in Rhyme; and that the Custom of the Persons of Quality among

mong us, to give their Vestments to Poets, which continues to this Day in Use at *Fez*, confirms this Suspicion : I answer ; That it is not impossible that we should receive Rhymes from the *Arabians*, and in Imitation of them, apply them to Romances. I'll allow farther, that the Inclination we then had for Romances, might be enhanced and fortified by their Example ; and that our Art of Romancing (as is probable) was enriched, and improved, by the Communication of Wars we were engaged in with *Spain* : But all this does not conclude, that we were indebted to them for our Inclination to this Art ; since 'twas in Use

Use with us, before'twas known among them.

This Reason does farther oblige me not to believe, that the Princes of *France* took the Custom of Divesting themselves of their Garments, in Favour of the Poets, from the *Arabian* Kings. I rather think, that each of them were affected with the Excellent Works they heard repeated, and could not restrain themselves from dispensing their Liberality immediately, and made use of their Garments, because they were nearest at Hand; as we read of some Saints, who have done the same to the Poor: And that this Custom, which was received into *France* by Accident,

cident, and is continued in *Fez*, may have been introduced into both the Places by Chance.

It is very credible, that the *Italians* were first induced to compose Romances, by the Examples of those in *Provence*, when the Popes sat at *Avignon*, and perhaps by that of other Divisions of the *French*, when the *Normans* and *Charles* Earl of *Anjou*, (Brother to *St. Louis*) a Virtuous Prince, a Lover of Poetry, and a Poet himself, made War in *Italy*. For the *Normans* could not refrain themselves from the Polite Science. History reports, they sung the Exploits of *Roland*, before they got that Memorable Battel, which gave the Crown of *England* to
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William the Bastard. All *Europe* was then overwhelmed with Darknells and Ignorance, but *France*, *England*, and *Germany* much less than *Italy*, which then produced but a small Number of Writers, and scarce any Authors of Romances. Those of that Country, who had a Mind to distinguish themselves by Learning and Knowledge, came for it to the University of *Paris*, which was the Mother of Sciences, and Nurse to the Learning of *Europe*. *St. Thomas Aquinas*, *St. Bonaventure*, the Poets *Danſe*, and *Boccace*, came thither to study ; and the President *Fanchet* produces, that the last of them took a great Part of his Novels from *French Romances*,

mances ; and that *Petrarch*, and the other *Italian* Poets, have rifled for their Richest Fancies, the Songs of *Thibaud* King of *Navarre*, *Gace's Brussiez*, *Chastelain de Corcy*, and the Old *French* Romances. 'Twas then, in my Opinion, that the *Italians* learned from us the Science of Romance ; which, by their own Confession, is to be ascribed to us, as well as that of Rhyming.

Thus *Spain* and *Italy* received from us an Art, which was the Effect of our Ignorance and Barbarity, and which the Politicians of the *Persians*, *Ionians*, and *Greeks* had produced. As Necessity engages us, in a Dearth of Bread, to sustain our Bodies

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with

with Herbs and Roots ; so when the Knowledge of Truth, which is the Proper and Natural Aliment of the Mind , begins to fail, we have Recourse to Falseness, which is the Imitation of Truth. As in Plenty we refuse Bread , and our ordinary Viands , for Ragousts ; so our Minds, when acquainted with the Truth , forsake the Study and Speculation of it , to be entertained with its Image, which is Fiction. This Imitation, according to *Aristotle*, is often more agreeable than the Original itself ; so that two oppositely different Paths , which are Ignorance and Learning, Rudeness and Politeness, do often conduct us to the same End ; which is,
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an Application to Fictions, Fables, and Romances. Hence it is, that the most Barbarous Nations are taken with Romantic Inventions, as well as the most Refined. The Originals of all the Savages of *America*, and particularly those of *Pern*, are nothing but Fables; no more are those of the *Goths*, which they wrote in their Ancient *Runic* Characters, upon great Stones; the Remains of which I my self have seen in *Denmark*. And if any Thing were left us of the Works, which the *Bards* among the Ancient *Gauls* composed, to eternize the Memory of their Nation, I don't question but we should find them enriched with Abundance of Fictions.

F 2

This

This Inclination to Fables, which is common to all Men, is not the Result of Reason, Imitation, or Custom. 'Tis Natural to them, and has its Seat in the very Frame and Disposition of their Soul. For the Desire of Knowledge is particular to Man, and distinguishes him from Beasts no less than his Reason. Nay we may observe in other Creatures some Rude Impressions of this ; whereas the Desire of Understanding is Peculiar to Us only.

The Reason of this, according to my Opinion, is ; because the Faculties of the Soul are of too Vast an Extent, to be supplied by the Present Objects , so that 'tis obliged to have

have recourse to what's past, and to come, in Truth and in Fictions, in Imaginary Spaces and Impossibilities, for Objects to exert it self upon. The Objects of Sense fill the Desires of the Soul of Brutes, who have no farther Concern; so that we can't discover in them these restless Emotions, which continually actuate the Mind of Man, and carry it into the Pursuit of a recent Information, to proportion (if possible) the Object to the Faculty; and enjoy a Pleasure, resembling that which we perceive in the Appeasing a Violent Hunger, and Extinguishing a Corroding Thirst. This is that which *Plato* intends, in the Marriage of *Do-*

rus and *Penia*, (in which Terms he would express Riches and Poverty,) which produces exquisite Pleasure. The Object is signified by Riches, which are not so but in Use and Intention ; otherwise they are Unfruitful, and afford no Delight. The Faculty is intended by Poverty ; which is sterile, and always attended by Inquietude, while 'tis separated from Riches ; whereas its Union with them, supplies the Highest Satisfaction. The Case is the same with our Souls : Poverty, the same with Ignorance, is Natural to it ; it sighs continually after Science, which is its Riches ; and when 'tis possess'd of this Enjoyment, it feels the greatest Pleasure. But
this

this Pleasure is not always equal ;
 it often is the Purchase of much
 Labour and Difficulty : As when
 the Soul applies it self to Intricate
 Speculations , and Occult
 Sciences , the Matter whereof is
 not present to our Senses ; where
 the Imagination, which acts with
 Facility, has a Less Part in the
 Pursuit than the Understanding,
 whose Operations are more Vele-
 ment and Intense : And be-
 cause Labour is naturally te-
 dious , the Soul is not carried to
 Hard and Spinous Learning, un-
 less in Prospect of some Advan-
 tage, or Hopes of some remote
 Amusement , or else by Necessi-
 ty. But the Knowledge which
 attracts and delights it most, is
 that which is acquired without

F 4

Pain -

Pain, and where the Imagination alone acts on Subjects which fall under our Sense, ravish our Passions, and are great Movers in all the Affairs of Life. Such are Romances, which require no great Intention or Dispense of Mind, to understand them. No long Reasonings are exacted; the Memory is not overburthened: Nothing is demanded, but Fancy and Imagination. They move our Passions; but 'tis on purpose to sooth and calm them again: They excite neither Fear nor Compassion; unless it be to display to us the Pleasure of seeing those we were afraid, or concern'd for, out of the Reach of Danger or Distress. In short, all our Emotions

tions there find themselves agreeably provoked and appeased.

'Tis hence, that those who act more by Reason than Passion, and labour more with their Imagination than Understanding, are affected by them ; tho' these other are touched by them too, but after another manner. These are touched by the Beauties of Art, which amuse the Understanding ; but the former, Ignorant and Simple, are sensible of no more than what strikes upon the Imagination, and stirs their Passions. They love the Fiction, and enquire no farther. Now Fictions being nothing but Narrations, True in Appearance, and False in Reality ; the Minds of the Simple, who discern on-

ly the Disguise, are pleased and highly satisfied with this Shew of Truth. But those who penetrate farther, and see into the Solid, are easily disgusted with the Falsity : So that the First love Falshood, because 'tis concealed under an Appearance of Truth ; the Latter are distasted with the Image of Truth, because of the Real Forgery which is couched under it ; unless it be varnished with Ingenuity, Subtilty, and Instruction, and recommends it self by the Excellency of Invention and Art. *St. Augustin* makes this Observation somewhere ; ‘ That these
‘ Falsities which carry a Signi-
‘ fication, and suggest an Hid-
‘ den Meaning, are not Lies,
‘ but

' but the Figures of Truth ;
 ' which the most Wise and Ho-
 ' ly Persons, and even our Sa-
 ' viour himself, have used upon
 ' Honourable and Pious Occa-
 ' sions.

Since then 'tis true, that Lies
 commonly flow from Ignorance,
 and the Grossness of our Intel-
 lect ; and that this Inundation
 of the *Barbarians*, who issued
 from the *North*, spread over all
Europe, and plunged it into such
 profound Ignorance, as it could
 not clear it self from, within the
 Space of Two Ages ; is it not
 then probable, that this Igno-
 rance caused the same Effect in
Europe, which it had produced
 every where besides ? And is it
 not vain to enquire for that in
 Chance,

Chance,, which we find in Nature? There is then no Reason to contend,, but that *French*, *German*, and *Engliſh* Romances, and all the Fables of the *North*, are the Fruits of thoſe Countries, and not imported from Abroad: That they never had other Originals than the *Hiftories* ſtuffed with Falſities, and made in *Obscure Ignorant Times*, when there was neither *Industry* nor *Curioſity* to diſcover the *Truth* of Things, nor *Art* to deſcribe it, if 'twas found: That theſe *Hiftories* have been well received by the *Unpoliſhed* and *Half-barbarous People*; and that the *Hiſtorians* thereupon took upon them the *Liberty* to preſent

sent them with what was purely forged, which were the Romances.

'Tis a common Opinion, that Histories have formerly been called by this Title, which is since applied only to Fictions; which, is an Irrefragable Testimony that the one proceeded from the other.

“ Romances, (saith *Pigna*);
 “ according to the Common
 “ Opinion in *France*, were the
 “ *Annals*: And because the Hi-
 “ story of the War, which was
 “ published successively, had
 “ that Name; some afterwards
 “ who neglected the Truth,
 “ (howsoever Fabulous they
 “ were) gave their Writings
 “ the same Name.

Strabo,

Strabo, in a Passage I have already alledged, saith, That the Histories of the *Medes*, *Persians*, and *Syrians*, have deserved but little Credit; since those who wrote them, when they saw the Inventers of Fables in great Esteem, believed they might Establish a Reputation, by writing Fables in the Form of Histories, which were the same with Romances. Whence we may conclude, that Romances had (in all Probability) the same Original with us, which they formerly had with other People.

But to return to the *Troubadours*, or *Trouverres*, (for so they called their Poets) of *Provence*,

vence, who were the Princes of Romancing in *France*. Their Mystery was so generally approved of, that all the Counties of *France* had Persons of that Profession.

The Eleventh Age produced a Matchless Number of them, both in Prose and Verse. Many of their Works are preserved, in Spite of the Envy of Time. Of this Number were the Romances of *Garin le Loheran*, of *Tristram*, *Lancelot*, *Du Lake*, *St. Greal*, *Merlin*, *Arthur*, *Perceval*, *Peneforest*, and of most of those 127 Poets who lived before the Year 1300, who have received the Censure of the President *Fauchet*.

I shall

I shall not undertake to represent them in a Catalogue ; nor examine whether the *Amadis de Gaul* were originally from *Spain*, *Flanders*, or *France* ; and whether the Romance of *Tiel Ulespiegel* be a Translation from the *German* ; or in what Language the Romance of the *Seven Wise Men of Grece* was first written ; or that of *Dolopathos*, which some say was extracted from the Parables of *Sandaber the Indian*. Some say 'tis to be found in *Greek* in some Libraries ; which has furnished the Matter of an *Italian* Book call'd *Erastus*, (and of many of *Boccace* his Novels, as the same *Fauchet* has remarked) which was written in *Latin*

tin by *John Morck*, of the *Abby de Hantefelne*, whercof *Ancient Copies* are to be seen; and translated into *French* by the Clerk *Hubert*, about the End of the *Twelfth Age*, and into *High Dutch* about *Three Hundred Years* afterwards; and an *Hundred Years* after that, from *High Dutch* into *Latin* again, by a *Learned Hand*, who changed the *Names* of it, and was ignorant that the *Dutch* had come from the *Latin*.

It shall suffice if I tell you, that all these *Works* which *Ignorance* has given Birth to, carried along with them the *Marks* of their *Original*, and were no other than a *Complication* of
Ficti-

Fictions, grossly cast together in the greatest Confusion, and infinitely short of the Excellent Degree of Art and Elegance, to which the *French* Nation is now arrived in Romances. 'Tis truly a Subject of Admiration, that we, who have yielded to others the Bays for *Epic* Poetry, and History, have nevertheless advanced these to so high a Perfection, that the Best of theirs are not Equal to the Meanest of ours.

We owe (I believe) this Advantage to the Refinement and Politeness of our Gallantry; which proceeds, in my Opinion, from the great Liberty which the Men of *France* allow to the Ladies.

Ladies. They are in a manner Recluses in *Italy* and *Spain* ; and separated from Men by so many Obstacles, that they are scarce to be seen , and not to be spoken with at all. Hence the Men have neglected the Art of Engaging the Tender Sex, because the Occasions of it are so rare. All the Study and Business there, is to surmount the Difficulties of Access ; when this is effected, they make Use of the Time, without amusing themselves with Forms. But in *France*, the Ladies go at large upon their Parole ; and being under no Custody but that of their own Heart , erect it into a Fort, more strong and secure than
all

all the Keys, Grates, and Vigilance of the *Donegnas*. The Men are obliged to make a Regular and Formal Assault against this Fort, to employ so much Industry and Address to reduce it, that they have formed it into an Art scarce known to other Nations.

'Tis this Art, which distinguishes the *French* from other Romances, and renders the Reading of them so Delicious, that they cause more Profitable Studies to be neglected.

The Ladies were first taken with this Lure : They made Romances their Study ; and have despised the Ancient Fable

ble and History so far, that they now no longer understand those Works, from which they received their greatest Embellishments : And lest they should blush at this Ignorance, which they find themselves so often guilty of ; they perceive they had better disapprove what they don't know, than take the Pains to learn it.

The Men, in Complaisance, have imitated them ; condemned what they disliked, and call that Pedantry, which made an Essential Part of Politeness, even in *Malherbe's* Time. The Poets, and other *French* Writers who succeeded, have been constrained to submit to this Arbitration ;

tration ; and many of them, observing that the Knowledge of Antiquity would be of no Advantage to them, have ceased to study what they durst not practise : Thus a very Good Cause has produced an Ill Effect ; and the Beauty of our Romances has drawn upon them the Contempt of Good Letters, and consequently Ignorance.

I don't, for all this, pretend to condemn the Reading of them. The Best Things in the World are attended with their Inconveniencies ; Romances too may have much worse than Ignorance. I know what they are accused for : They exhaust our Devotion, and inspire

spire us with Irregular Passions,
 and corrupt our Manners. All
 this may be, and sometimes
 does happen. But what can't
 Evil and Degenerated Minds
 make an Ill Use of? Weak
 Souls are contagious to them-
 selves, and make Poyson of e-
 very Thing. Histories must be
 forbidden, which relate so ma-
 ny Pernicious Examples; and
 the Fable must undergo the same
 Fate; for there Crimes are au-
 thorised by the Practice of the
 Gods.

A Marble Statue, which was
 adored by the Publick Devoti-
 on of the *Heathens*, incited the
 Passion, Brutality, and Despair
 of a Young Man.

Cherea,

Cherea, in *Terence*, fortifies himself in a Criminal Design, at the Sight of a Picture of *Jupiter*, which drew the Reverence of all other Spectators.

Little Regard was had to Sobriety of Manners, in most Part of the *Greek* and *Old French* Romances, by Reason of the Vice of the Times in which they were composed. Even the *Astrea*, and some others which have followed, are Licentious. But the Modern Romances (I speak of the Good ones) are so far from this Fault, that you'll scarce find an Expression, or Word, which may shock Chaste Ears, or one single Action which may give Offence to Modesty.

If

If any one object ; That Love is treated of in a Manner so Soft and Insinuating , that the Bait of this Dangerous Passion invades too easily the Tender Hearts : I answer , That it is so far from being Dangerous, that it is in some Respects Necessary, that the Young People of the World should be acquainted with it ; that they may stop their Ears to that which is Criminal , and be better fortified against its Artifices ; and know their Conduct , in that which has an Honest and Sacred End. This is so true, that Experience lays before us , that such as are least acquainted with Love, are the most unguarded to its Assaults,

faults, that the most Ignorant are the soonest decoyed. Add to this, that Nothing so much refines and polishes Wit ; Nothing conduces so much to the Forming and Advancing it to the Approbation of the World, as the Reading of Romances. These are the Dumb Tutors, which succeed those of the College, and teach us how to Live and Speak by a more Persuasive and Instructive Method than their's ; who deserve the Complement of *Horace* upon the *Iliad*, ' That it teaches Morality ' more effectually, than the Pre- ' cepts of the most Able Phi- ' losophers.

Mon-

Monsieur *D'Urfee* was the first who retrieved them from Barbarity, and reduced them to Rules, in his Incomparable *Astrea*, The most Ingenious and Polite Work which has appeared in this Kind, and which Eclipsed the Glory which *Greece*, *Italy* and *Spain*, had acquired. However, he has not discouraged those who come after him to undertake what he has performed. He has not so far engrossed the Public Admiration, but that some are still left for the many Excellent Romances which displayed themselves in *France* since His.

G 2

None

None can, without Amazement, read those which a Maid, as Illustrious in her Modesty, as her Merit, has published under a Borrowed Name; depriving her self so Generously of that Glory which was her Due, and not seeking for a Reward, but in her Virtue; as if while She took so much Trouble for the Honour of our Nation, She would spare that Shame to Our Sex. But Time has done her that Justice, which She denied her self; and has informed us, that the Illustrious *Bassà*, Grand *Cyrus*, and *Clelia*, are the Performances of Madam *de Scudery*: That the Art of making Romances, which might defend
it

